

does government have the power to force citizens to buy anything. And further, if a citizen or business doesn't purchase the insurance, a criminal fine masquerading as a tax is imposed without benefit of a jury trial or legal representation. If the citizen cannot afford the fine, do they go to jail without constitutional protections?

This bill is an affront to individual liberty. It denies the citizen of life, liberty and property, and violates due process of law under the fifth amendment.

The false analogy that citizens must buy car insurance is not applicable. Driving is a privilege and an option regulated by the States. No one is forced to own or drive a car. Here everyone is forced to buy insurance or face a criminal penalty.

Somewhere in this debate we ought to be concerned with the Federal Government bruising the Constitution.

And that's just the way it is.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well, 140 days after the Republican leaders promised a health care plan, it was leaked. It is a bold proposal. I think it was actually drafted downtown by the health insurance industry association, just like their prescription drug bill was drafted by the pharmaceutical industry.

Now the Democrats' bill outlaws the most abusive practices of the insurance industry: preexisting condition exclusion policy cancellation when you get sick, called rescission. Not the Republicans, they can still cancel your policy when you get sick. Even if you have been paying your premiums, they can still discriminate against your preexisting conditions. The Republicans wouldn't touch that one.

Now the Republicans actually are going to facilitate further abuses. The Democrats rescind the antitrust exemption of the insurance industry. Not the Republicans. In fact, they are creating a new safe haven for this industry. The industry can sell a national policy which will solve all of the problems, but they can go to any State they choose to sell that policy from.

They will choose the most abusive, least regulated State in the Union. And if you live in Oregon and you have a complaint about your insurance provider, you will have to file it in Delaware with the corporation commissioner. No, give it to the Republicans, new safe havens for the abusive insurance industry. Good work, guys.

SHALL V. MAY PELOSI TAKEOVER BILL

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to join Congressmen FLEMING, GINGREY, HELLER, and HERGER to introduce an amendment to automatically enroll all Members of Congress in the government-run option.

In the Education and Labor Committee, I was able to pass the amendment requiring Congress to take the government-run option, but the Pelosi takeover plan changes the word which would make Congress take the government-run option being pushed on the American people. That one small "may" reverses the meaning of the bill.

If Speaker PELOSI insists on shoving this bill through, then I believe Members of Congress should take the government-run option. If it is good enough for the American people, then it is good enough to Congress.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the global war on terrorism. Congratulations to State Representative-elect Ralph Norman and Elaine of Rock Hill, South Carolina, for their overwhelming victory yesterday.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, on the most important issue this Congress will consider, what was so egregious that dozens of my Republican colleagues paraded to the floor yesterday to make passionate speeches in opposition to the Affordable Health Care for America Act? I shall tell you. It was the fact that the word "shall" appeared 3,400 times in the bill.

Well, that is an interesting point, but it also reveals a certain amount of amnesia about law writing and civilization. After all, one of our most important and formative laws had the word "shall" in every sentence: You shall honor your father and mother. You shall recognize the Sabbath to keep it holy. You shall not covet. You shall not steal. You shall not murder. And most importantly probably for this debate in this House, You shall not bear false witness.

Mr. Speaker, if this is all the Republicans have, I say let's talk about font size or paper color. No, millions of Americans are suffering because of lack of health care. They cannot afford it. Eighteen thousand are dying a year. Almost a million are going bankrupt because of health care costs. We shall give America the health care reform they deserve.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, according to the experts at

CMS, the Democrats' health care bill is bad news for seniors. Seniors citizens have a right to know that the cost for Pelosi's trillion dollar government takeover of health care is paid for with almost \$500 billion in Medicare cuts.

First, millions of seniors will lose their health plans. The experts predict that enrollment in Medicare Advantage will decline 64 percent, and that Medicare benefits will be cut for 11 million seniors enrolled in Medicare Advantage.

Second, according to the Congressional Budget Office, the Democrat health plan will increase the cost of Medicare prescription drug premiums by 20 percent. Seniors will literally lose their right to choose. Cutting the benefits seniors are entitled to in the name of creating government-run health insurance is just wrong.

Seniors want, need, and deserve better from America.

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HEALTH REFORM—MEDICARE

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of national comprehensive health care reform for all Americans.

Since its creation under the direction of President Lyndon Johnson, Medicare has proved to be one of the great success stories of the Federal Government. We want to improve the solvency of the program to ensure our seniors today continue to enjoy the program and that our children will be able to collect Medicare benefits in the future.

H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act, does not endanger traditional Medicare, but it does immediately improve the program. Currently, there are 56,000 Medicare beneficiaries in the 29th Congressional District in Texas that I represent. H.R. 3962 improves their Medicare benefits by providing free preventative and wellness care, improving primary and coordinated care, improving nursing home quality, and strengthening the Medicare Trust Fund.

Each year, 4,400 seniors in our district hit the doughnut hole and are forced to pay for drug costs despite having part D coverage. This legislation will provide these seniors with immediate relief, covering the first \$500 of doughnut hole costs next year, cutting brand-name drug costs in the doughnut hole by 50 percent, and completely eliminating the doughnut hole by 2019.

Mr. Speaker, that's why we need H.R. 3962, to improve health care for our seniors and all Americans.

HEALTH CARE AMENDMENTS REMOVED

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the health care bill we will consider this week spent 3 months behind closed doors. It started out with 1,000 pages and came out with 2,000 pages. While you might think that nothing had been removed in those closed door sessions, you may be surprised to find out that bipartisan amendments already adopted at the committee level have been gutted or tossed out. Now Speaker PELOSI is saying that we don't need amendments on the floor since we already had that opportunity at the committee level.

In the Energy and Commerce Committee, we adopted one amendment to ensure that the Center for Comparative Effectiveness Research would not be used to ration health care. We also adopted another amendment that would have prevented the center from dictating to doctors what type of treatments they can offer. Why would these amendments be gutted or removed from the bill? The only conclusion is that the authors of the bill want to move us in the direction of government-rationed care.

In Canada and Britain, similar boards are used to ration care and dictate how doctors treat their patients. Americans do not want government bureaucrats determining their treatments. They want those decisions left to doctors that they trust.

WATER FOR SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

(Mr. COSTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I joined together with Congressmen CARDOZA and RADANOVICH in a bipartisan effort to introduce legislation on the part of our ongoing efforts to bring more water to the San Joaquin Valley, and today I rise in support of that bill.

As I have said before on this floor, regulatory and hydrological reductions in water supply deliveries have devastated my district and parts of the Central Valley in California, leaving our cities and communities in many areas with unemployment levels of 30 to 40 percent.

This legislation calls for the review of the Federal biological opinions that have reduced the amount of water flowing to the valley, leaving some of the hardest working people you'll ever meet in your life ironically standing in food lines, unable to provide food for their families. Our farmers are in danger of losing their farms, and in some cases they have held them for generations.

The two biological opinions in question, one issued by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the other by the National Marine Fisheries Service, focus solely on Central Valley. They need to be reconsidered because I believe they are flawed.

For the last 18 months, I have repeatedly said there is not one single cause for the decline in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Delta system and their fisheries. This legislation will assure that all environmental factors are taken into account.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, as a physician with over 30 years' experience, I cannot state strongly enough how devastating this Pelosi bill is going to be for American families, businesses, and seniors.

This 1,990-page bill has come in at a cost of \$1.3 trillion by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. It will create \$700 billion in new taxes. It will cover over 6 million illegal immigrants, and as many as 5.5 million American workers can lose their jobs.

The government takeover of health care proposed in the Pelosi health care plan could cause as many as 114 million Americans to lose their current coverage.

This bill will also ring in a new level of Federal spending, creating levels of bureaucracy that will cost trillions of dollars in new Federal spending and will exacerbate the deficit and imperil the Nation's long-term fiscal solvency.

And finally, cuts to Medicare Advantage plans will result in higher premiums and dropped coverage for more than 10 million seniors.

In short, the Pelosi health care bill will raise taxes, provide less coverage for families and seniors, and cost millions of Americans their jobs.

ANNIVERSARY OF ASSASSINATION OF YITZHAK RABIN

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today is the 14th anniversary of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin.

Yitzhak Rabin was the Prime Minister of Israel on November 4, 1995, when he was assassinated. He was one of the great men of the world, and like November 22 in our country, that is a date that we should all remember.

Yitzhak Rabin served two terms as prime minister, from 1974 to 1977 and 1992 to 1995. He also served as Defense Minister in Israel during the Six-Day War, and was responsible for the raid in Entebbe. He was a great Israeli leader who was killed because he reached out to bring about peace with the PLO. He was given the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

During his time as Prime Minister in the seventies, he brought about peace with Egypt, and in the nineties with Jordan and with the PLO and with Yasser Arafat.

We had a debate on this floor yesterday about a resolution. I don't think

we would have been having that debate if the assassin's bullet had not struck Yitzhak Rabin. I think we would have peace in the Middle East. It takes strong men like him, sometimes men of war, to bring about peace and reach across the aisle to their adversaries.

A MESSAGE TO THE BLUE DOGS

(Mr. MCCAUL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I have a message today for the 52 Blue Dog Democrats out there, 40 of whom are conservative Democrats in districts that President Bush carried, and my message is loud and clear for them today, and that is that your leadership is making you walk the plank on this health care bill. Don't do it. Don't fall for it. Don't take the bait, for it will be your political suicide.

Stand with us on the Republican side. Stand with us conservatives to defeat the Pelosi health care bill. You have the power to defeat this government takeover of our health care system and the takeover of one-sixth of our economy. You have the opportunity to do something right for America. Stand with us. Stand with us as conservatives. Stand up for the American people.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I have looked at the revised Democrat health care bill. It raises taxes. It raises premiums. It cuts Medicare. It costs \$1 trillion. It puts a myriad of bureaucrats in between the patient and the doctor. Call me thick, but I don't get it. Why are they doing this?

We need targeted reforms. Americans have said loudly, I don't want to give up my health care. I want you to help the people who have fallen through the cracks, but let me keep mine because my program is working. And they're not being selfish; they're using common sense. If the kitchen sink is leaking, you don't take a wrecking ball to the entire kitchen. You fix the sink.

We need targeted health care that doesn't cut Medicare and doesn't raise taxes and doesn't cause premium increases. The Republican Party has offered many of these, and some of them are signed by Democrats. We can put together a targeted, bipartisan alternative, and we need to do it.

HEALTH CARE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, after weeks of meeting behind closed doors, last week Speaker PELOSI unveiled her latest plan for a government takeover of health care.